

HOUSE HEALTH & HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE AMENDMENT 1

Amendment No. 1 to HJR0175

Armstrong
Signature of Sponsor

FILED
Date _____
Time _____
Clerk _____
Comm. Amdt. _____

AMEND <SB>

House Joint Resolution No. 175*

by deleting the language of the introduced resolution in its entirety, including the caption, and by substituting instead the following:

A RESOLUTION to create a special joint committee to study various issues relative to prematurity and Tennessee's rate of premature births.

WHEREAS, according to the March of Dimes, prematurity is the leading cause of infant mortality in the United States, accounting for twenty-three percent (23%) of deaths within the first month of life, and the leading cause of death for African-American babies in the first year of life; and

WHEREAS, the March of Dimes also reports that nearly one-half (1/2) of all long-term neurological disabilities, such as mental retardation, cerebral palsy, and hearing and visual problems, are related to prematurity; and

WHEREAS, more than 467,000 babies were born premature in the United States in 2000, according to the National Center for Health Statistics; and

WHEREAS, African-American babies in the United States are nearly twice as likely to be born premature than white babies, according to the National Vital Statistics Report; and

WHEREAS, according to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, average hospital charges in 2000 for a prematurity-related newborn stay averaged almost thirteen (13) times higher than for a typical newborn stay; and

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WHEREAS, only three (3) states had a higher rate of premature births than Tennessee, with fourteen percent (14%) of Tennessee newborns being born premature in 2001, according to the National Center for Health Statistics; and

WHEREAS, according to the Tennessee Department of Health, 8,489 Tennessee babies were born premature in 2000, an average of twenty-three (23) babies a day; and

WHEREAS, fifteen and one-tenth percent (15.1%) of Tennessee's African-American babies were born premature in 2000, as compared to nine and one-half percent (9.5%) of white babies; and

WHEREAS, African-American babies represented twenty-one percent (21%) of all Tennessee births in 2000, but made up thirty percent (30%) of premature births and fifty-seven percent (57%) of prematurity-related infant deaths; and

WHEREAS, African-Americans on TennCare were at an even higher risk for prematurity, with the uninsured/uninsurable population's premature birthrate at fifteen and seven-tenths percent (15.7%) and the Medicaid-eligible population's premature birthrate at sixteen percent (16%) in 2000; and

WHEREAS, the March of Dimes has launched a seventy-five million dollar, (\$75,000,000) five-year national campaign to increase awareness of the growing problem of prematurity and to decrease the rate of premature births; and

WHEREAS, the incidence of premature births in this State, and especially the high premature birthrate for African-American babies, negatively affects the health, welfare and quality of life of literally thousands of Tennesseans, and it is thus most appropriate that the

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General Assembly should carefully and exhaustively study this very serious problem; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that there is hereby created a special joint committee to study various issues relative to prematurity and Tennessee's rate of premature births.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special joint committee shall consist of four (4) members of the House of Representatives and four (4) members of the Senate, to be appointed by the respective Speakers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all appropriate state agencies shall provide assistance to the special joint committee upon request of the chair.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all legislative members of the special joint committee who are duly elected members of the General Assembly shall remain members of such committee until the committee reports its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special joint committee shall be convened by the member with the most years of continuous service in the General Assembly, and at its first meeting shall elect a chair, vice chair, and such other officers the committee deems necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special joint committee shall timely report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the One Hundred Third General Assembly by January 31, 2004, at which time the committee shall cease to exist.